AUSTRALIA-CHINA SCIENCE AND RESEARCH FUND

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

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Website:  www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRF
Email:  acsrf@innovation.gov.au
Information Hotline:  02 6276 1093
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Program Overview

The Australian Government, in partnership with the Government of the People’s Republic of China, has established the Australia-China Science and Research Fund (ACSRF), hereafter referred to as “The Fund”. The Fund is jointly managed by the Australian Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, hereafter referred to as “The Department”, and the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST).

The objective of the Fund, stated in the Memorandum of Understanding⁠¹, is to support strategic science and research collaboration of mutual benefit to Australia and China.

The emphasis in this Fund is on building critical mass in areas of strategic priority, building enduring partnerships and responding to the distinctive nature of the Australia-China relationship, where the role of government in promoting collaboration between researchers and industries in our respective countries is greatly valued.

The Fund consists of three components²:

- Australia-China joint research centres (JRCs)
- Australia-China group missions
- Australia-China science and research knowledge exchange

Australia-China Science and Research Fund

to support strategic science and research collaboration of mutual benefit to Australia and China

Australia-China joint research centres

virtual centres linking Australian and Chinese research institutions, conducting a portfolio of research-related activities in a specified field of research

Australia-China group missions

visits by Australian groups to China or Chinese groups to Australia to achieve specific purposes related to research and research-driven innovation

Australia-China science and research knowledge exchange

measures to increase the exchange of knowledge on issues and opportunities associated with Australia-China science and research

Consistent with Australia’s commitment in the Joint Ministerial Statement³, the Fund will operate for three financial years, from 2011-12 to 2013-14.

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¹ Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research of Australia and the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People’s Republic of China on the management of the Australia-China Science and Research Fund, signed at Shanghai on 2 August 2011.
³
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These guidelines apply only to Australian applicants.

1. Joint research centres

1.1 Overview

For the purpose of the Fund, JRCs are virtual centres which link Australian and Chinese research institutions conducting a portfolio of research-related activities in a specified field of research. JRCs facilitate a concentration of effort and outcomes beyond that which can be expected with individual research projects. JRCs may include industry or other end user partners, to achieve application and commercialisation of research outcomes.

The size of JRCs, in terms of the number of organisations involved, may vary. JRCs must include at least one Australian Eligible Research Organisation\(^4\) and one Chinese partner, however JRCs may be used as a catalyst to bring together leading institutions in Australia in a particular research field with Chinese partners to achieve economic, environmental and social benefits for Australia and China.

Eligible Research Organisations may only submit one JRC application, but may also be a partner in other JRC applications. If successful, it is the Eligible Research Organisation which has submitted the application which will be the grant Recipient and manage the JRC.

Other Australian incorporated entities, including Australian businesses, can be partners with the Eligible Research Organisation in a JRC application.

Applicants who have received funding for collaboration with China under the International Science Linkages (ISL) program are eligible to apply via their Eligible Research Organisation, but must show how the new joint research centre activities differ from the activities which have previously been supported.

The Australian Government will contribute a maximum of AUD $1,000,000 (GST exclusive) for each JRC, with matching funding from the Chinese Government.

1.2 Round dates and duration of funding

There will only be one funding round for JRC applications in the period 2011-12 to 2013-14. The opening and closing dates of the funding round will be advertised on the Fund website at www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRF. Applications for JRCs will not be accepted at any other time.

Subject to the conclusion of bilateral selection processes between the Australian and Chinese Governments, and contract negotiation with successful applicants, it is envisaged that successful JRCs will commence from early 2012-13, with funded activities to be concluded by 30 June 2014.

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\(^3\) Joint Ministerial Statement on Bilateral Cooperation in Science and Research, signed at Beijing on 26 April 2011.

\(^4\) See definition of Eligible Research Organisation in the Glossary at the end of these Program Guidelines
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1.3 Joint research centre eligibility criteria

To be eligible for funding for a JRC under the Fund, the Australian application must satisfy the following criteria:

- must seek support for international collaborative research activities in one of the nominated priority areas of research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority area of research</th>
<th>Including (but not limited to)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and biological sciences</td>
<td>Food science and technology, marine biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth and planetary sciences</td>
<td>Geosciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>New energy</td>
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<td>Environmental science</td>
<td>Water resources</td>
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<td>Engineering and materials science</td>
<td>Electric vehicles and new materials</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
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<td>Mining</td>
<td>Minerals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physics and astronomy</td>
<td>Optical and radio astronomy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multidisciplinary projects related to sustainable futures</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- must demonstrate agreement from the proposed Chinese partner/s to participate in the JRC, in writing on official letterhead and signed by a person authorised to provide such an undertaking

- must be submitted by the research office (or other single authorised central office) of an Eligible Research Organisation that is registered for GST, is incorporated or, if a university, is exempt from income tax

- must include a valid reference number obtained from the Department (see section 1.10)

- must provide all of the information required in the application

- must accept the Intellectual property rights principles outlined in these Program Guidelines (see section 1.9)

- must not be for activities previously funded or currently being funded by the Australian Government

1.4 Joint research centre assessment criteria

Providing that the eligibility criteria set out in section 1.3 have been met, JRC applications will be assessed on a competitive basis against the assessment criteria set out in the table below.

Using the application form available at [www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRF](http://www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRF), applicants are required to demonstrate their claims against Assessment Criteria A, B and C.

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5 Agencies subject to the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997 (FMA Act 1997) are ineligible to apply.
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Australia-China Science and Research Fund Assessment Criteria | Scored out of
--- | ---
A | The relevance and potential national benefits to Australia of the proposed joint research centre activities in priority areas of science and research (defined in section 1.3)
- explain what the specific national benefits of this JRC will be for Australia (economic, environmental, social benefits)
- summarise the activities to be undertaken and the related outcomes, performance indicators and budgets | 40
B | The contribution of the centre to building enduring Australia-China collaboration in a priority field of research
- describe the reason for establishing or expanding/extending this JRC with Chinese partners
- explain the strategy to maintain the momentum of this collaboration beyond the term of funding from DIISR | 20
C | The capacity of the partners to manage the centre and deliver the activities
- explain why these Australian and Chinese partners are the key organisations to be involved in this centre and how the collaboration will be managed
- summarise the support available from the partners for the centre, including cash and in-kind contributions from Australian partners
- summarise the research leadership and management credentials of up to five key Australian staff (including the project manager) and how they will operate as a team
- provide an overview of how the intellectual property for this JRC will be managed and strategies for protecting Australia’s interests | 40

Total /100

1.5 Joint research centre activities

The following activities can be included in JRC applications, where they also meet the eligibility criteria (see section 1.3):

- Joint research programs with Chinese partner/s
- Conferences, workshops, symposia related to the JRC’s joint research programs
- Exchanges and secondments of personnel between Australia and China from the JRC’s partners for purposes related to the JRC’s joint research programs
- New research-related information sharing and communication initiatives related to the JRC’s joint research programs
- Other JRC activities (subject to negotiation with the Department)
1.6 Eligible expenses

Eligible expenses for joint research centres include:

- international travel to mainland China and within China\(^6\) by Australian personnel directly involved in approved JRC activities, including postgraduate students\(^7\)
- living allowance\(^8\) within mainland China, for Australian personnel directly involved in the JRC activities, including Postgraduate students\(^9\)
- salaries and on-costs for Australian personnel directly employed for the JRC’s activities
- research specific consumables in Australia
- workshop and conference expenses in Australia
- registration for Australian researchers, including postgraduate students, at a conference or regional meeting to present a JRC research program-specific research paper or report
- JRC research program-related website creation and database development costs
- costs associated with technology transfer or diffusion activities, except where this is of a distinctly commercial or proprietary nature
- costs directly associated with safe transport of research materials for research activities, such as transporting samples to a site for testing
- administration costs relating to JRC activities (up to a maximum of 15\% of the value of approved activities)
- other costs agreed by the Department in negotiations with the applicant.

1.7 Ineligible expenses

Ineligible expenses for joint research centres include:

- any cost incurred prior to signing of a funding agreement with the Department
- capital expenditure for the purchase of assets such as office furniture and equipment, motor vehicles, computers and the construction, renovation or extension of facilities such as buildings and laboratories
- costs associated with activities undertaken by the Chinese partners, e.g. travel to Australia, living costs in Australia, research undertaken solely by Chinese researchers etc.
- costs associated with research activities with Hong Kong, Macau or Taiwan
- costs associated with market research for products or research carried out by surveys to assess the size of the market and the price of a particular service or product
- costs associated with marketing projects, i.e. activities aimed at creating demand for goods and services of consumers, businesses and government
- costs such as rental, renovations and utilities relating to the establishment and maintenance of a retailing or trade showroom of equipment
- salaries for non-Australian personnel, including consultants, unless prior agreement in writing is obtained from the Department

\(^6\) Travel costs of up to $2,500 per person (maximum) for international economy class return airfares and domestic economy class airfares within China
\(^7\) Consistent with the requirements of the Australian Postgraduate Award
\(^8\) Living allowance of up to $200 per person per day or $2,500 per person per month whichever is the lesser amount
\(^9\) Consistent with the requirements of the Australian Postgraduate Award
• fees for international students, or the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) and Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) liabilities for students
• insurance costs (the applicant must effect and maintain adequate insurance or similar coverage to cover any liability arising as a result of its participation in ASCRF funded activities)
• staff recruitment and relocation costs
• Australian domestic travel and living allowance
• costs associated with the protection or patenting of intellectual property
• debt financing
• costs of Australia’s membership of international S&T projects
• subscription costs for access by Australian personnel to major international research facilities
• costs associated with product development and the building or production of commercial prototypes

This list is not exhaustive. Other costs may be ineligible where the Department decides that they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the JRC’s research activities or that they are contrary to the objective of the Fund. The applicant must ensure it has adequate funds to meet the costs of any ineligible expenditure associated with the JRC’s research programs.

1.8 GST

The Department will not provide funding to cover any amounts of GST incurred by an applicant in circumstances where the applicant is entitled to claim input tax credits for those GST amounts. Therefore, when submitting budgets, applicants should identify the GST exclusive cost of items in respect of which the applicant is entitled to an input tax credit.

A successful applicant who receives funding from the Department may incur tax obligations. All applicants should seek independent professional advice on any tax implications.

1.9 Intellectual property rights¹⁰

Collaborative activities will protect intellectual property rights which relate to or arise from innovations developed under the joint research activities. The ascription and allocation of rights and interests regarding Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) will occur on the basis of respective contribution and equitable interests.

The allocation of IPRs arising from the joint research activities will occur on the basis of a project management plan or collaboration arrangement developed jointly for each project by its proponents. Contracts to protect IPRs will be signed in accordance with laws and regulations in force in Australia and China.

Intellectual property in these guidelines is defined in terms of Article 2 of the World Intellectual Property Organisation Convention signed in Stockholm on 14 July 1967.

¹⁰ Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research of Australia and the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People’s Republic of China on the management of the Australia-China Science and Research Fund, signed at Shanghai on 2 August 2011.
1.10 Application process

Applicants must apply for funding to support collaboration between Australian and Chinese partners. Each Australian applicant must have a Chinese partner and each partner must submit an application to their respective government. Applications may include other international partners, provided the primary partner is Chinese and they have submitted an application to the Fund via the Chinese Government. The Australian applicant should inform the Chinese applicant of their JRC reference number.

The research office (or other single authorised central office) of each Eligible Research Organisation preparing an application for JRC funding (maximum of one application per Eligible Research Organisation) must contact the Department via acsrf@innovation.gov.au to be allocated a valid reference number for their application. Applications without a valid reference number will not be accepted.

Australian applicants must apply to the Fund using the application form available at www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRF. Applicants are to complete and lodge their JRC application online at www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRF. Incomplete applications or applications not received by the advertised closing time and date will not be considered.

In submitting an application to the Fund, applicants must consent to personal information being used and disclosed by the Department.

Responsibilities of the applicant

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that they have examined these guidelines and met all related requirements. Applicants should ensure that they have satisfied themselves as to the correctness and sufficiency of their application.

Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred in the preparation and lodgement of applications and in respect of any discussions, negotiations, enquiries or any work undertaken prior to signing a funding agreement with the Department.

Discrepancies, ambiguities, inconsistencies, errors or omissions in an application

The Australian Government will not accept responsibility for any misunderstanding arising from the failure by an applicant to comply with these guidelines, or arising from any ambiguity, discrepancy, error or omission contained in an application.

If an applicant discovers any material discrepancy, ambiguity, inconsistency, error or omission in their application, they must immediately bring it to the attention of the Department by email to acsrf@innovation.gov.au.

The Department may request further information from an applicant and allow an applicant to remedy any discrepancies, ambiguities, inconsistencies, errors or omissions in an application at any time, including after the round closing date. The Department reserves the right to request and consider new information regarding matters referred to in the original application at any time, including after the round closing date. On these matters, the Department’s decision will be final. No correspondence will be entered into in relation to the decision other than to inform the applicant of the decision.
The Department may consult with other Australian Government agencies if it believes the applicant is seeking duplicate funding. The Department may also seek an applicant’s permission to obtain further advice from other third parties if appropriate.

1.11 Assessment of applications

The Program Delegate, with the assistance of the Department, will determine whether a JRC application meets the eligibility requirements outlined in these guidelines (see section 1.3). Eligible applications will then be referred to an independent assessment panel for consideration. This panel will consist of eminent members appointed by the Department. These individuals will have demonstrated expertise and experience in research and research management. The panel will assess each application against the assessment criteria and provide recommendations to the Department.

Joint selection of successful applications by Australia and China will be discussed by the respective government departments and informed by the panel’s recommendations. Typically, JRCs will be jointly funded by the Australian and Chinese Governments. However the provision of unilateral funding by either the Australian or Chinese Government under the Fund may be considered, subject to availability of funds and agreement by both governments during the selection process.

Decisions are made by the Joint Working Group11 and will be final. The Joint Working Group is the group of officials from the Department and MOST nominated by the Australian and Chinese Governments to develop and manage the guidelines for the Fund and select the activities to be given funding support according to the guidelines. Outcomes of successful applications will be posted at www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRF

1.12 Successful applications

The Department will write to the contact officer nominated in the successful Australian application advising of the success of the application and notifying the level of funding being offered to support the JRC. This level of funding may differ from the level of funding requested in the application.

In order to receive the grant, the successful Eligible Research Organisation must then enter into a funding agreement with the Department. The funding agreement outlines the responsibilities of the parties (the Recipient and the Department) and includes the terms and conditions of the JRC activities and grant funding.

Successful applicants will have 20 business days from the date of the letter sent with the funding agreement in which to sign the agreement and return it to the Department. Should an applicant be unable to sign the agreement within that period the offer of funding may lapse.

The Department has no obligation to provide successful applicants with any funding until the funding agreement has been executed by both parties. Successful applicants must not start work on the JRC activities until the funding agreement is in place.

11 Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research of Australia and the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People’s Republic of China on the management of the Australia-China Science and Research Fund, signed at Shanghai on 2 August 2011.
The Eligible Research Organisation is responsible for ensuring that it has entered into an agreement with its partners about the operation of the JRC.

All proposed activities to be undertaken by the applicant funded through the Fund must comply with all Federal and State laws, codes and regulations relevant to the conduct of science and research and associated activities.

1.13 Joint research centre management and accountability

The funding agreement is the contract between the Department and the Eligible Research Organisation (Recipient). The funding agreement outlines the responsibilities and obligations of all parties and includes the terms and conditions relating to the JRC activities funded using the grant.

Reporting

The funding agreement stipulates the reporting obligations including content requirements for each report and relevant due dates. Reports must be submitted using the templates provided at www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRF. If the Recipient is unable to submit a report by the due date specified in the funding agreement, they should immediately notify the Department.

Recipients should be aware that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth).

Payments

The first payment for successful funding Recipients will be made on execution of the funding agreement by both parties and on receipt by the Department of a correctly rendered tax invoice. Subsequent payments will be made on acceptance by the Department that reporting obligations have been met and a correctly rendered tax invoice has been provided.

For the schedule of payments and reporting requirements please refer to the funding agreement.

It is important to note that funding must only be used to pay for approved activities and costs detailed in the funding agreement.

The Department reserves the right to reduce, recall or terminate ACSRf funding where an expenditure report or audit report demonstrates that funds have not been used in accordance with the funding agreement between the Department and the Recipient.
Variations

The Recipient must notify the Department immediately upon becoming aware of any circumstances that are likely to adversely affect the Recipient’s ability to comply with the terms of the funding agreement.

The Department, at its sole discretion, will determine whether the changed circumstances and proposed changes require a formal written variation to the funding agreement. Variations in retrospect will not be considered.

1.14 Use of information provided by applicants

All applications become the property of the Department on submission.

All information provided by applicants will:

- be retained by the Department for the purposes of the Fund for a period of seven years and will be destroyed by it thereafter;
- be available for use by the Department for any purpose connected with the management of the Fund; and
- will not be returned to the applicant.

The Department gives no undertaking to keep confidential information provided in the application process, unless that information is clearly identified by the applicant as information that the applicant considers should be treated as confidential, including reasons for the request to treat such information as confidential.

The Department reserves the right to accept or refuse a request to treat information as confidential. The Department will use the criteria set out in the Australian National Audit Office’s Report Number 38/2000 (The Use of Confidentiality Provisions in Government Contracts) as a guide when determining whether to accept a claim for confidentiality.

The Department’s obligations to keep information confidential will not be breached if the information is authorised or required to be disclosed by law.

The Department reserves the right to use any information provided in a successful application for the financial monitoring of the project and for any reviews and/or investigations it may subsequently undertake.
2. Australia-China group missions

2.1 Overview

For the purpose of the Fund, group missions are visits by Australian groups (two or more personnel to China), or Chinese groups (two or more personnel to Australia), to achieve specific purposes related to research and research-driven innovation. Groups may comprise members from one or more organisations.

This component is intended to be a flexible mechanism which supports efforts to move beyond ‘meet and greet’ activities to more complex undertakings with a clear purpose related to research and its application. For example, missions may be used for purposes such as negotiating and signing new Australia-China research facilitation agreements, sending teams to plan joint research-related programs with Chinese partners or research/industry missions.

The Australian Government will contribute up to AUD $45,000 (GST exclusive) for each group mission. Except for the existing activities nominated below in this section, or as otherwise agreed at the discretion of the Australian Government, Australian grants will be applied in support of the costs of Australian outbound missions to China.

Eligible Research Organisations \(^{12}\) may submit up to two group mission applications within an annual round, but may also be a partner in other group mission applications. If successful, it is the Eligible Research Organisation which has submitted the application which will be the grant Recipient and manage the group mission.

Other Australian incorporated entities, including Australian businesses, can be partners with the Eligible Research Organisation in a group mission application.

Following government to government consultations between Australia and China in August 2011, two established activities – an annual exchange program for young researchers (known to date as the Young Scientists Exchange Program) and an annual symposium between the Australian Academy of Science, the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (hosted alternately in Australia and China) - will also be supported through this component of the Fund.

2.2 Round dates and duration of funding

There will be annual funding rounds for group mission applications. The opening and closing dates for funding rounds for group mission applications will be advertised on the ACSRIF website at www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRIF. Applications for group missions will not be accepted at any other time.

Applications will be assessed in order of receipt and, subject to eligibility, consultation required with the Chinese Government and contract negotiation with successful applicants, it is envisaged that support for group missions can be made available within three months of submission of an approved application. Group missions are to be

\(^{12}\) See definition of Eligible Research Organisation in the Glossary at the end of these Program Guidelines
completed within six months of receipt of funding unless otherwise agreed by the Department.

2.3 Group mission eligibility criteria

To be eligible for funding for a group mission, the Australian application must satisfy the following criteria:

- be for a purpose directly related to the objective of the Fund (see Program Overview) and seek support for one or more of the eligible group mission activities
- must demonstrate agreement from the proposed Chinese partner/s to participate in or facilitate the group mission, in writing on official letterhead and signed by a person authorised to provide such an undertaking
- must be submitted by the research office (or other single authorised central office) of an Eligible Research Organisation\(^{13}\) that is registered for GST, is incorporated or, if a university, is exempt from income tax
- must include a valid reference number obtained from the Department (see section 2.9)
- must provide all of the information required in the application
- must accept the Intellectual property rights principles outlined in these Program Guidelines (see section 2.8)
- must not be for activities previously funded or currently being funded by the Australian Government

2.4 ACSRF group mission activities

The following activities can be included in group mission applications, where they also meet the eligibility criteria (see section 2.3):

- early and mid-career researcher exchange programs with Chinese partner/s
- research-related workshops and symposia with Chinese partner/s
- research-related visits and secondments of Australian researchers to China (including cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional missions)
- research-industry missions to China
- other group missions to achieve specific purposes related to the objective of the Fund (see Program Overview)

Note that, except as agreed at the discretion of the Australian Government, Australian Government funding is to be applied in support of the costs of Australian outbound missions to China.

\(^{13}\) Agencies subject to the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997 (FMA Act 1997) are ineligible to apply.
2.5 Eligible expenses

- international travel to mainland China and within China\(^\text{14}\) by Australian personnel directly involved in the group mission activities, including postgraduate students\(^\text{15}\)
- living allowance\(^\text{16}\) within mainland China, for Australian personnel directly involved in the group mission activities, including postgraduate students\(^\text{17}\)
- registration for Australian researchers, including postgraduate students, at a conference or regional meeting to present a project-specific research paper or report
- research-related website creation and database development costs
- costs associated with technology transfer or diffusion activities, except where this is of a distinctly commercial or proprietary nature
- administration costs relating to group mission activities (up to a maximum of 15% of the value of approved activities)
- other costs agreed by the Department in negotiations with the applicant

2.6 Ineligible expenses

- any costs related to activities that do not directly support the achievement of the approved and planned outcomes for the group mission
- any cost incurred prior to signing of a funding agreement with the Department
- capital expenditure for the purchase of assets such as office furniture and equipment, motor vehicles, computers and the construction, renovation or extension of facilities such as buildings and laboratories etc.
- costs associated with activities undertaken by the Chinese partners, e.g. travel to Australia, living costs in Australia, research undertaken solely by Chinese researchers etc.
- costs associated with activities with Hong Kong, Macau or Taiwan
- workshop and conference expenses in Australia, unless prior agreement in writing is obtained from the Department
- insurance costs (the applicant must effect and maintain adequate insurance or similar coverage to cover any liability arising as a result of its participation in ASCRF funded activities)
- costs associated with market research for products or research carried out by surveys to assess the size of the market and the price of a particular service or product
- costs associated with marketing projects, i.e. activities aimed at creating demand for goods and services of consumers, businesses and government
- costs such as rental, renovations and utilities relating to the establishment and maintenance of a retailing or trade showroom of equipment
- salaries for Australian personnel participating in the group missions
- fees for international students, or the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) and Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) liabilities for students
- research specific consumables in Australia
- salaries for non-Australian personnel, including consultants, unless prior agreement in writing is obtained from the Department

\(^{14}\) Travel costs of up to $2,500 per person (maximum) for international economy class return airfares and domestic economy class airfares within China

\(^{15}\) Consistent with the requirements of the Australian Postgraduate Award

\(^{16}\) Living allowance of up to $200 per person per day or $2500 per person per month whichever is the lesser amount

\(^{17}\) Consistent with the requirements of the Australian Postgraduate Award
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- staff recruitment and relocation costs
- Australian domestic travel and living allowance
- costs associated with the protection or patenting of intellectual property
- debt financing
- costs of Australia’s membership of international S&T projects
- subscription costs for access by Australian personnel to major international research facilities
- costs associated with product development and the building or production of commercial prototypes

This list is not exhaustive. Other costs may be ineligible where the Department decides that they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the group mission or that they are contrary to the objective of the Fund. The applicant must ensure it has adequate funds to meet the costs of any ineligible expenditure associated with the group mission.

2.7 GST

The Department will not provide funding to cover any amounts of GST incurred by an applicant in circumstances where the applicant is entitled to claim input tax credits for those GST amounts. Therefore, when submitting budgets, applicants should identify the GST exclusive cost of items in respect of which the applicant is entitled to an input tax credit.

A successful applicant who receives funding from the Department may incur tax obligations. All applicants should seek independent professional advice on any tax implications.

2.8 Intellectual property rights

Collaborative activities will protect intellectual property rights which relate to or arise from innovations developed under the joint research activities. The ascription and allocation of rights and interests regarding Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) will occur on the basis of respective contribution and equitable interests.

The allocation of IPRs arising from the joint research activities will occur on the basis of a project management plan or collaboration arrangement developed jointly for each project by its proponents. Contracts to protect IPRs will be signed in accordance with laws and regulations in force in Australia and China.

Intellectual property in these guidelines is defined in terms of Article 2 of the World Intellectual Property Organisation Convention signed in Stockholm on 14 July 1967.

2.9 Application process

Applicants must apply for funding for group missions to achieve specific purposes related to research and research-driven innovation with Chinese partners. The group missions

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18 Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research of Australia and the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People’s Republic of China on the management of the Australia-China Science and Research Fund, signed at Shanghai on 2 August 2011.
component is a bilateral, complementary initiative, that is Australian and Chinese groups need not apply for joint funding concurrently, however evidence of bilateral partner commitment to participate in or facilitate the group mission is required in support of an application.

The research office (or other single authorised central office) of each Eligible Research Organisation preparing an application for group mission funding (maximum of two applications per Eligible Research Organisation within an annual round) must contact the Department via acsrf@innovation.gov.au to be allocated a valid reference number for their application. Applications without a valid reference number will not be accepted.

Australian applicants must apply to the Fund using the application form available at www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRF. Applicants are to complete and lodge their group mission application online at www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRF. Incomplete applications or applications not received by the advertised closing time and date will not be considered.

In submitting an application to the Fund, applicants must consent to personal information being used and disclosed by the Department.

Responsibilities of the applicant

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that they have examined these guidelines and met all related requirements. Applicants should ensure that they have satisfied themselves as to the correctness and sufficiency of their application.

Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred in the preparation and lodgement of applications and in respect of any discussions, negotiations, enquiries or any work undertaken prior to signing a funding agreement with the Department.

Discrepancies, ambiguities, inconsistencies, errors or omissions in an application

The Australian Government will not accept responsibility for any misunderstanding arising from the failure by an applicant to comply with these guidelines, or arising from any ambiguity, discrepancy, error or omission contained in an application.

If an applicant discovers any material discrepancy, ambiguity, inconsistency, error or omission in their application, they must immediately bring it to the attention of the Department by email to acsrf@innovation.gov.au.

The Department may request further information from an applicant and allow an applicant to remedy any discrepancies, ambiguities, inconsistencies, errors or omissions in an application at any time, including after the round closing date. The Department reserves the right to request and consider new information regarding matters referred to in the original application at any time, including after the round closing date. On these matters, the Department’s decision will be final. No correspondence will be entered into in relation to the decision other than to inform the applicant of the decision.

The Department may consult with other Australian Government agencies if it believes the applicant is seeking duplicate funding. The Department may also seek an applicant’s permission to obtain further advice from other third parties if appropriate.
2.10 Assessment of applications

The Program Delegate, with the assistance of the Department, will determine whether an Australian group mission application meets the eligibility requirements outlined in these guidelines (see section 2.3). The Department will consult with MOST on Australian group mission applications as required, consistent with the joint Operational Guidelines. Decisions made by the Program Delegate about the eligibility of a group mission application are final.

Applications will be assessed and, where deemed eligible, funded in order of receipt via the online submission system. Applications will be funded within the limit of available funds for each annual funding round.

The Department reserves the right to vary the annual limit on the number of applications which will be accepted from Eligible Research Organisations and to modify the opening and closing dates for annual rounds of group mission applications. Where this is to occur, the Department will endeavour to provide 20 business days notice of changes on the ACSRФ website at www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRF.

2.11 Successful applications

The Department will write to the contact officer nominated in the successful Australian group mission application advising of the success of their application and notifying the level of funding being offered to support the group mission. This level of funding may differ from the level of funding requested in the application.

In order to receive the grant, the successful Eligible Research Organisation must then enter into a funding agreement with the Department. The funding agreement outlines the responsibilities of the parties (the Recipient and the Department) and includes the terms and conditions of the group mission activities and grant funding.

Successful applicants will have 20 business days from the date of the letter sent with the funding agreement in which to sign the agreement and return it to the Department. Should an applicant be unable to sign the agreement within that period the offer of funding may lapse.

The Department has no obligation to provide successful applicants with any funding until the funding agreement has been executed by both parties. Successful applicants must not start work on the group mission activities until the funding agreement is in place.

The Eligible Research Organisation is responsible for ensuring that it has entered into an agreement with its partners about the operation of the group mission.

All proposed activities to be undertaken by the applicant funded through the Fund must comply with all Federal and State laws, codes and regulations relevant to the conduct of science and research and associated activities.

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2.12 Group mission management and accountability

The funding agreement is the contract between the Department and the Eligible Research Organisation (Recipient). The funding agreement outlines the responsibilities and obligations of all parties and includes the terms and conditions relating to the group mission activities funded using the grant.

Reporting

The funding agreement stipulates the reporting obligations including content requirements for each report and relevant due dates. Reports must be submitted using the templates provided at www.innovation.gov.au/ACSRF. If the Recipient is unable to submit a report by the due date specified in the funding agreement, they should immediately notify the Department.

Recipients should be aware that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth).

Payments

The first payment for successful funding Recipients will be made on execution of the funding agreement by both parties and on receipt by the Department of a correctly rendered tax invoice. Any subsequent payments will be made on acceptance by the Department that reporting obligations have been met and a correctly rendered tax invoice has been provided.

For the schedule of payments and reporting requirements please refer to the funding agreement.

It is important to note that ACSRF funding must only be used to pay for approved activities and costs detailed in the funding agreement.

The Department reserves the right to reduce, recall or terminate ACSRF funding where an expenditure report or audit report demonstrates that funds have not been used in accordance with the funding agreement between the Department and the Recipient.

Variations

The Recipient must notify the Department immediately upon becoming aware of any circumstances that are likely to adversely affect the Recipient’s ability to comply with the terms of the funding agreement.

The Department, at its sole discretion, will determine whether the changed circumstances and proposed changes require a formal written variation to the funding agreement. Variations in retrospect will not be considered.

2.13 Use of information provided by applicants

All applications become the property of the Department on submission.
AUSTRALIA-CHINA SCIENCE AND RESEARCH FUND
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All information provided by applicants will:

- be retained by the Department for the purposes of the Fund for a period of seven years and will be destroyed by it thereafter;
- be available for use by the Department for any purpose connected with the management of the Fund; and
- not be returned to the applicant.

The Department gives no undertaking to keep confidential information provided in the application process unless that information is clearly identified by the applicant as information that the applicant considers should be treated as confidential, including reasons for the request to treat such information as confidential.

The Department reserves the right to accept or refuse a request to treat information as confidential. The Department will use the criteria set out in the Australian National Audit Office’s Report Number 38/2000 (The Use of Confidentiality Provisions in Government Contracts) as a guide when determining whether to accept a claim for confidentiality.

The Department's obligations to keep information confidential will not be breached if the information is authorised or required to be disclosed by law.

The Department reserves the right to use any information provided in a successful application for the financial monitoring of the project and for any reviews and/or investigations it may subsequently undertake.
3. Australia-China science and research knowledge exchange

3.1 Overview

In this component of the Fund, the Department will undertake and support measures which increase the exchange of knowledge about Australia-China science and research collaboration. These exchanges will take place between government, the science and research community and industry and other stakeholders.

A distinctive feature of the Australia-China science and research relationship is the value accorded to role of government in promoting collaboration between researchers and industries in our respective countries. Governments have a role in facilitating discussions on challenges and opportunities associated with bilateral cooperation, and in providing opportunities for institutions and individuals to engage beyond institutional, disciplinary and other boundaries.

Activities which will be undertaken and/or supported by the Department will include (but are not limited to) the following:

- seminars and networking events on Australia-China science and research collaboration
- reports, bulletins and other information-sharing initiatives which improve understanding of Australia-China science and research collaboration and the impact of those activities

3.2 Knowledge exchange partners

Where the Department needs to identify partners for activities under this component of the ACSRF, a call for proposals will be initiated.

### Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAH</td>
<td>Australian Academy of the Humanities</td>
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<tr>
<td>AAS</td>
<td>Australian Academy of Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACSRPF</td>
<td>Australia-China Science and Research Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSA</td>
<td>Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABN</td>
<td>Australian Business Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARC</td>
<td>Australian Research Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATSE</td>
<td>Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aus personnel</td>
<td>Australian citizens or Australian permanent residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>Cooperative Research Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Australia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Eligible Research Organisation | Higher education institution/provider (defined in this Glossary)  
Publicly Funded Research Agency (defined in this Glossary)  
Cooperative Research Centre  
Incorporated Australian private and not-for-profit research organisations  
Any organisation falling under the FMA Act is not an Eligible Research Organisation |
| FOI     | Freedom of Information |
| Group   | Two or more personnel |
| GST     | Goods and services tax |
| Higher education institution/provider | An organisation listed as a Table A or Table B provider in the Higher Education Support Act 2003. |
| ISL     | International Science Linkages program |
| IP      | Intellectual property |
| IPP     | Information Privacy Principles |
| JRC     | Joint Research Centre |
| JWG     | Joint Working Group |
| MOST    | Ministry of Science and Technology, People’s Republic of China |
| NHMRC   | National Health and Medical Research Council |
| Postgraduate students | Honours, Masters and PhD students enrolled at an Australian higher education institution |
| **AUSTRALIA-CHINA SCIENCE AND RESEARCH FUND**  
| **PROGRAM GUIDELINES** |
| --- | --- |
| **Program Delegate** | The Program Delegate is an employee of the Department who has been empowered by the Minister, or is otherwise duly authorised, to carry out relevant functions in respect of the Fund |
| **Project manager** | The person with overall responsibility for planning, executing and reporting on the project. |
| **Publicly Funded Research Agency (PFRA)** | An Australian organisation to which the following criteria apply:  
  - it is at least 50 per cent owned or controlled by the Commonwealth, or an Australian state or territory government;  
  - it is primarily carrying out research and development activities; and  
  - it is providing services, or making facilities available, in relation to science or technology; training, or assisting in the training of, persons in the field of scientific or technological research; or collecting, interpreting or publishing information relating to science or technology.  
Organisations that are subject to the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997 (FMA Act 1997) are ineligible to apply to the Fund. |
| **Recipient** | The Eligible Research Organisation which has submitted an approved application and entered into a funding agreement with the Department |
| **Reference number** | The number allocated by the Department to the Eligible Research Organisation for a joint research centre or group mission application |
| **R&D** | Research and Development |
| **S&T** | Science and Technology |